



Ronna Timpa, president of Workplace ESL Solutions, and daughter Sarah regularly read five books each night.

Family literacy month

November 1st is National Family Literacy Day[®], but many stakeholders celebrate all month long. According to the National Center for Family Literacy, "It's never been more important to spread the word in your community and build awareness for the importance of families working together toward a better educated tomorrow."

The Center recently published the following strategies that adult educators can teach parents to use with their children.

Phonemic Awareness (the ability to hear, identify, and manipulate individual sounds in spoken words)

- Sing songs, say chants and poems, and share nursery rhymes.
- Ask your child to think of and share as many words as he can that begin with the same sound.
- Say a word and ask your child to say as many words as she can that rhyme with that word.

Phonics (the relationships between the letters of written language and the sounds of spoken language)

- As you read with your child, point to letters and ask him to name them.

- Make an alphabet book together, using letters and drawings for each letter.
- Encourage your child to write notes, lists, letters to family and friends, and stories.
- Play word games such as "I spy something that starts with 'm.' What is it?"

Fluency (the ability to read quickly and accurately with expression)

- Read aloud to your child, changing your voice for different characters in the story.
- As you read, pause and show your child where sentences begin and end.
- Read books together that your child is interested in by taking turns reading a page. When your child slows down or makes mistakes, encourage her to read the page again.
- Encourage your child to read lots of different items — books, magazines, newspapers, letters, signs, etc.

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ESL tip: stand up!

—Pam Woicicki, ESL instructor at CCSN dzrtwilo2@yahoo.com, 702/645-6887

If you want your students to start talking, get them out of their chairs. For some reason, getting them off their duffs opens their mouths! Whether you wish to have them practice asking each other questions, recite dialogs, or have a discussion ... putting them on their feet works wonders.

Try this: Have students stand facing each other in two lines. After a few minutes, send one or more students from one end of their line to the other end and tell them to continue talking. In this formation, students can practice the same structures repeatedly and with new partners every couple of minutes. They don't get bored, and they benefit from getting to know their classmates much better than they would otherwise. This works well with beginning and intermediate students, even in crowded classrooms.

Another example: Begin by having students introduce themselves to one person. Then have them stand and cluster in groups of four around the room. As tardy students enter, tell them to join one of the quartets. After a few minutes, tell the students to reconfigure themselves into three larger groups. I tried this, and there were very few lulls, everyone participated, and I only heard English!

Family literacy strategies *(continued from page 1)*

Vocabulary (the words we know to communicate effectively)

- Talk with your child often about family events, interests, friends, and activities at school.
- As you read or talk with your child, draw his attention to new words and talk about what they mean.
- When reading with your child, ask her to describe the illustrations and then point to words in the text that match her descriptions.
- Write new words in a list. Display this list at home, and encourage your child to use these new words when talking and writing.
- Look up new words in the dictionary or thesaurus to find out what they mean.

For additional tips and resources, visit www.familit.org.

Text Comprehension (the ability to understand what is read)

- Encourage your child to tell stories. Ask him questions about the characters, the story's message, and the beginning, middle, and end of the story.
- When reading with your child, encourage her to predict what might happen next. Discuss events in the story and compare them to her own experiences.
- Read many different kinds of books (poetry, fiction, nonfiction), plus magazines and newspapers.
- Visit interesting places (museums, zoos, parks). Do things together (cooking, shopping, sports). Talk about these experiences with your child.
- Encourage your child to write for different purposes, such as writing lists, letters, stories, or reports. Also encourage him to write for different audiences, like family, friends, or the general public.
- After your child has read a book, ask her about the meaning of the book.



Links through LINCS

LINCS, the Literacy Information aNd Communication System, provides a single focal point for adult literacy resources, knowledge, and expertise from across the nation and around the world.

Nevada's literacy Web site, www.literacynet.org/nevada, is part of the LINCS network. Here are just a few of the resources you can access through this portal.

- ✓ Click on "Adult Education in Nevada" and follow the link to "MK's Message" for a monthly update from Mary Katherine Moen, Nevada's Adult Education Consultant.
- ✓ Click on "Nevada Literacy Coalition" to access a current calendar of events, directory of non-profit instructional providers, the State Literacy Resource Center, and other resources maintained by the Nevada State Library and Archives.
- ✓ Click on the "Teacher/Tutor" button (along the left) to access resources recommended by and for Nevada's educators. Here you will find links to:
 - o [ESL Core Curriculum Materials](#) for ESL low intermediate, low advanced, high intermediate, and high advanced (Claudia Bianca-DeBay, Beth Bradford, JoAnn Coleman, and Paul Marsala, Truckee Meadows Community College)
 - o [ESL Computer Literacy Curriculum](#) for advanced ABE/ESL learners with little or no computer skills (Brett Patchen and Paul Marsala, TMCC)
 - o [Pronunciation/Vocabulary Building Curriculum](#) (Vicki Newell, Northern Nevada Literacy Council)
 - o [Science: Pig Hearts and Onion Skins Curriculum](#) (Val Lyons-Brady, TMCC)
- ✓ Click on the "Collections" button (near the top of the page) to gain access to 12 special collections of high-quality literacy resources for adult education and literacy programs. **LINCS** Special Collections are built around specific content areas, such as ESL, health literacy, technology, science and numeracy, etc.
- ✓ There's lots more ... explore!

Nevada's literacy Web site includes a "search the site" feature (upper left) that combs PDF files as well as Web pages!

The success of the fathers (and mothers) ...

The family into which a child is born frequently indicates the likely socioeconomic status and roles the child will inhabit as an adult. We see this in households rich and poor, from palace to prison and from classroom to boardroom. Below is an excerpt from a November 2003 address by Robert Wedgeworth, president of ProLiteracy Worldwide, in which he addresses four factors regarding the intergenerational transfer of literacy skills and the role adult literacy programs can play in changing existing patterns.

1. Parents' low literacy directly affects their children's performance in school. Studies show that children of parents who have less than a high school education tend to do poorest on reading tests. Children of high school graduates do considerably better, and children of parents who have education beyond high school do considerably better than that. These differences in test scores have held constant since 1971, and the same differences show up in the scores of third, eighth, and 11th graders.
2. Adults pass on to children their own expectations about education and achievement. A review of 67 research studies on literacy programs found that as parents spend time in adult literacy programs, their attitudes toward education change. The more literate they become, the more value they perceive in education. The more they support their children's learning, the more they become involved in their children's schools. The result is that their children's school achievement jumps. The same report found that as parents continue to spend time in literacy programs, their children attend school more regularly, achieve higher IQ scores, and are more likely to complete their educations.
3. As parents become more literate, their children's school performance improves. One of the most intriguing impacts of improved adult literacy is the impact on children. According to a report by the U.S. Department of Education, "The single most significant predictor of children's literacy is their mother's literacy level." In short, the best way to ensure that children become successful in school is to address the literacy needs of the adults in their lives. By becoming more literate, caregivers become role models for children. When children see their parents reading, they want to read. In their study of family literacy programs, Mikulecky and Lloyd discovered that, after six months, older children's book and magazine reading increased by about 40 percent.
4. When adults improve their literacy skills, studies show that children's long-term gains are also impressive. Overall, children have fewer nutrition and health problems, drop out of school less, and have fewer teen pregnancies, less joblessness, and less social alienation. In other words, children's long-term gains are predicated on life changes — better jobs, improved family financial and health security, etc. — that their parents are able to make because of improved literacy skills.

According to the National Center for Family Literacy Research Department, the higher the mother's educational level, the better the child performs on reading, math, and general knowledge national achievement tests. About 16 percent of kindergartners whose mothers have a high school diploma or equivalent score in the highest quartile; only about six percent of those whose mothers did not complete high school score as highly. Performance rises to about 47 percent for children of college graduates.

And the success of the economy ...

- ✓ A 2001 American Management Association survey of member and client companies found that 34.1 percent of job applicants lack the literacy skills needed to do the jobs they seek.
 - ✓ Fifty percent of Fortune 500 companies now underwrite basic skills education for their employees at an annual cost of \$300 million per year.
 - ✓ According to a National Association of Manufacturers survey report, 40 percent of manufacturers cite workers' insufficient reading, writing, math, and communication skills as a principal reason they cannot implement new productivity improvements.
- All totaled, limited literacy skills of employees is costing U.S. business and taxpayers an estimated \$20 billion annually in lost wages, profits, and productivity. — *From Robert Wedgeworth's 2003 address*

Wedgeworth's entire speech, complete with citations, is at <http://www.proliteracy.org/downloads/ProLiteracyStateOfLiteracy.pdf>

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This professional development project is a leadership activity funded by a grant from the Nevada State Department of Education, Workforce Investment Act, Title II (Adult Education and Family Literacy). There is no discrimination or denial of participation on the basis of gender, race, national origin, color, disability, age, or sexual orientation.

Free workshops for Nevada's adult educators

Throughout this academic year, ABE leadership funds will again provide in-depth training on a variety of timely subjects in support of the goals of the Nevada State Plan for Adult Basic Education.

The full-day workshops are geared to the specific needs of programs funded through the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act. Each funded program has chosen two workshops for on-site presentation and will act as host for the event. These free trainings are open to ALL adult educators in Nevada — no matter where they work — on a space-available basis. Contact the appropriate host to reserve your spot for these upcoming workshops.

<u>Title/date/place</u>	<u>Host (contact)</u>	<u>Presenter and objectives</u>
Creating a Lesson Plan Using Teaching and Learning Styles 11/13/04; Reno	Brad Deeds TMCC 775/829-9052 bdeeds@tmcc.edu	Lynn Kelting-Gibson. Develop lesson plans utilizing a variety of teaching and learning styles while participating in whole group and small group discussions. Determine the best practices for presenting lessons while participating with and observing the presenter. Review and restructure current lesson plans after participating in the lesson-planning workshop.
Tried and True Tips for Terrific Teachers 11/20/04; Las Vegas	Cynthia Pierrott CCSN 702/651-4296 cynthia_pierrott@ccsn.edu	Val Brady. Revitalize all experienced instructors with a toolkit of fresh, useful teaching tips and techniques. Provide for and promote a lively exchange of tips and teaching techniques among instructors. Encourage experimentation, exploration, and implementation of new activities and strategies in the classroom.
What's New in Adult Teaching? Emerging Trends and Teaching Strategies 12/03/04; Las Vegas	Lyn Pizor Churchwright Multicultural Ctr. 702/434-6858 lyn@churchwright.org	Don Prickel. Examine current myths and realities associated with teaching adults. Use learning style analyses to design improved learner-centered instruction. Apply at least two learner-centered strategies to the teaching of adult learners.

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